

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for synchronizing a supplier's production with a manufacturer's production comprising the steps of:
 - establishing a production schedule for said manufacturer's production;
 - determining a time needed to receive supplies from a supplier, said time needed to receive supplies determined by said manufacturer;
 - transmitting a supply order to said supplier in accordance with said time needed to receive supplies, said supply order comprising a production delivery time according to said production schedule for said manufacturer's production;
 - starting said supplier's production in accordance with said production delivery time according to said production schedule for said manufacturer's production;
 - receiving supplies from said supplier in accordance with said production delivery time according to said production schedule for said manufacturer's production;
 - moving said supplies to said manufacturer's production line;
 - starting production at said manufacturer's production line in accordance with said manufacturer's production schedule; and
 - consuming said supplies in accordance with said production schedule established for said manufacturer's production.
2. The method of claim 1 wherein the step of determining a time needed to receive supplies from a supplier comprises the steps of:
 - determining a time required by said supplier to produce supplies;
 - determining a time required by said supplier to transport said supplies to said

manufacturer;

determining a time required by said manufacturer to unload said supplies;

determining a time required by said manufacturer to said stage supplies;

determining a time required by said manufacturer to move said supplies to a location on said manufacturer's production line; and

determining a total time by adding said time required by said supplier to produce supplies, said time required by said supplier to transport said supplies to said manufacturer, said time required by said manufacturer to unload said supplies, said time required by said manufacturer to stage said supplies, and said time required by said manufacturer to move said supplies to a location on said manufacturer's production line.

3. The method of claim 2 further comprising the step of adding time to said total time to account for delays in each activity.

4. The method of claim 1 wherein the step of transmitting a supply order to said supplier comprises the steps of:

transmitting a production sequence;

transmitting said production delivery time; and

transmitting a production line location.

5. The method of claim 4 wherein the step of transmitting a production sequence to said supplier comprises the step of transmitting details about a model, type, options, and color for an automobile.

6. The method of claim 1 wherein the step of transmitting a supply order to said supplier comprises the step of transmitting a supply order to said supplier in accordance

with TCP/IP.

7. The method of claim 1 wherein the step of transmitting a supply order to said supplier comprises the step of transmitting a supply order to said supplier in accordance with XML.
8. The method of claim 1 wherein the step of transmitting a supply order to said supplier comprises the step of requesting a capacity confirmation from said supplier prior to transmitting a supply order.
9. A system for synchronizing a supplier's production with a manufacturer's production comprising:
 - a manufacturer's production line;
 - a production schedule for said manufacturer's production line;
 - a manufacturer computer adapted to transmit supply orders to a supplier computer based on the production status at said manufacturer's production line, said supply orders transmitted to said supplier when the production status indicates supplies are needed to meet said production schedule;
 - a supplier computer adapted to receive supply orders from a manufacturer computer, said supply orders comprising production delivery times in accordance with said production schedule for said manufacturer's production line;
 - a supplier production line for producing supplies in accordance with a production delivery time in a supply order from said manufacturer computer, said production delivery time in accordance with said production schedule for said manufacturer's production line;
 - and

a production line location at said manufacturer's production line for holding said supplies produced by said supplier, said supplies consumed in accordance with said production schedule for said manufacturer's production line.

11. The system of claim 9 wherein said supply order comprises a production line location.
12. The system of claim 9 wherein said supply order comprises a production sequence.
13. The system of claim 12 wherein said production sequence comprises a model, a type, a plurality of options, and a color for an automobile.
14. The system of claim 9 wherein said manufacturer computer and said supplier computer are adapted for communication in accordance with TCP/IP.
15. The system of claim 9 wherein said manufacturer computer and said supplier computer are adapted for communication in accordance with XML standards.
16. The system of claim 9 further comprising a capacity confirmation from said supplier computer.
17. A method for synchronizing a supplier's production with a manufacturer's production comprising the steps of:
 - establishing a production schedule for said manufacturer's production;
 - transmitting to a supplier a supply order comprising a production sequence, a production delivery time, and a production line location at said manufacturer in accordance with said production schedule for said manufacturer's production;
 - starting said supplier's production in accordance with said production delivery time in accordance with said production schedule for said manufacturer's production;

receiving supplies from said supplier in accordance with said production delivery time in said supply order, said production delivery time in accordance with said production schedule for said manufacturer's production;

moving said supplies to said production line location; and

consuming said supplies at said production line location in accordance with said production schedule for said manufacturer's production.

18. The method of claim 17 wherein said production sequence comprises the step of transmitting details about a model, a type, a plurality of options, and a color for an automobile.
19. The method of claim 17 wherein the step of starting said supplier's production in accordance with said production delivery time comprises the step of starting said supplier's production to meet said production delivery time of said production schedule for said manufacturer's production.
20. The method of claim 17 wherein said production delivery time is based on a time required by said supplier to produce supplies, a time required by said supplier to transport said supplies to said manufacturer, a time required by said manufacturer to unload said supplies, a time required by said manufacturer to said stage supplies, and a time required by said manufacturer to move said supplies to said production line location.
21. The method of claim 17 wherein the step of transmitting a supply order to said supplier comprises the step of transmitting a supply order to said supplier in accordance with TCP/IP.
22. The method of claim 17 wherein the step of transmitting a supply order to said

supplier comprises the step of transmitting a supply order to said supplier in accordance with XML.

23. The method of claim 17 wherein the step of transmitting a supply order to said supplier comprises the step of requesting a capacity confirmation from said supplier.